

WIZARD  
AND  
1/2  
CHAOS  
COMICS

# Lady Death



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Bull  
JENSEN



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*We give you a look inside the creators' drawing pad*


We at Wizard are extremely proud to join Brian Pulido, Steven Hughes, and all the good people at Chaos Comics, in bringing you this very special *Lady Death* #1/2 issue. I'm sure the final result will overjoy people who are already fans of the woman who seeks to destroy all life on earth, and send the converted looking for more.

By the time you read this, chances are *Lady Death* will have spent nearly a year on the *Wizard* Top Ten Comics list, and there's a reason for that. It doesn't take a genius to know that when you've got the perfect combination of a fantastic story, art, and characters, you're going to get your money's worth and more.


But go and read the story from the opening passage to the closing words; it's 100 percent solid. Also, check out our in-depth interview with the creators of the *Lady Death* saga, and enjoy the exclusive sketchbook art, available only in this issue.

Gareb Shamus

The Big Cheese




TO KNOW HER STORY  
IS TO KNOW A WOMAN  
CURSED.



SHE'S THE QUEEN OF ALL  
THAT IS DEAD AND DYING,  
THE INCOMPARABLE,  
UNFORGETTABLE...

# Lady Death



I WILL NEVER  
WALK THE EARTH  
AGAIN UNTIL THE  
LIVING ARE  
EXTINGUISHED,  
HE SAID.


LUCIFER,  
FATHER OF  
LIES. HOW  
LONG HAS IT  
BEEN SINCE  
HE CURSED  
ME?

EONS.

THANKS TO MY EMISSARY  
"THE EVIL ONE" I AM CLOSER  
NOW THAN EVER TO MY GOAL  
OF MEGADEATH.

WHAT WOULD  
MOTHER THINK  
OF ME NOW?

I REMEMBER  
THE LAST TIME  
I SAW YOU  
MOTHER...



AFTER I VANQUISHED  
LUCIFER I TRANS-  
FORMED HELL INTO  
MY REALM.

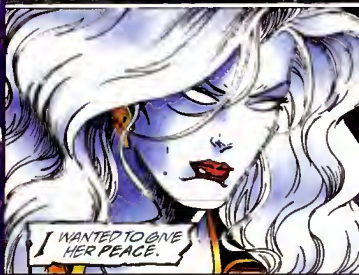
IF THE LIVING  
WERE TO  
DIE I WOULD  
HAVE THEIR  
GRAVES  
WAITING

YET I HAD UNFINISHED  
BUSINESS TO ATTEND  
TO. THE PRINCE OF LIES  
USED MY MOTHER'S SOUL  
TO MANIPULATE ME.

HER SOUL... SUCH  
A KIND SOUL...  
WAS OUT THERE, IN  
THE ENDLESS  
GRAVEYARD.



I SEARCHED SO LONG MONTHS TURNED  
INTO YEARS. THE GRAVEYARD WAS  
INFINITE. IT STRETCHED TO ETERNITY.



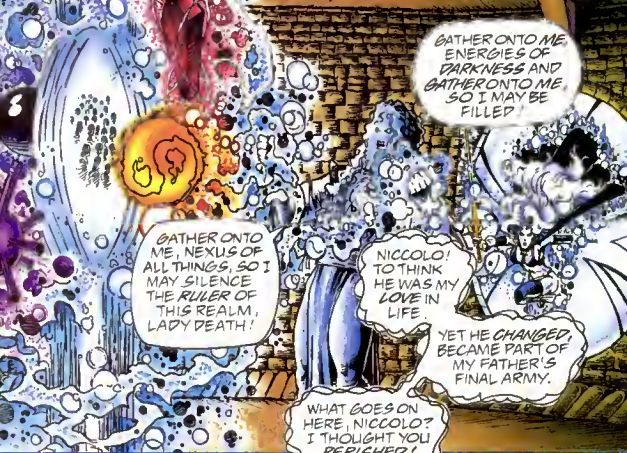
I WANTED TO GIVE  
HER PEACE.



A  
CATHEDRAL? CURIOUS...







GATHER ONTO ME  
ENERGIES OF  
DARKNESS AND  
GATHER ONTO ME,  
SO I MAY BE  
FILLED!

GATHER ONTO ME,  
NEXUS OF  
ALL THINGS, SO I  
MAY SILENCE  
THE RULER OF  
THIS REALM,  
LADY DEATH!

NICCOLO!  
TO THINK  
HE WAS MY  
LOVE IN  
LIFE.

YET HE CHANGED,  
BECAME PART OF  
MY FATHER'S  
FINAL ARMY.

WHAT GOES ON  
HERE, NICCOLO?  
I THOUGHT YOU  
PERISHED!

I'VE BEEN BUSY, HOPE. THERE  
IS MUCH TO DISCOVER. FOR  
EXAMPLE, THIS-- THE NEXUS  
OF ALL THINGS. WITH THE PROPER  
SPELLS, ONE CAN TRAVEL  
TO PLACES ONLY IMAGINED.

BEFORE YOU GET  
IDEAS, HOPE KEEP  
IN MIND YOU MUST  
BE WORTHY TO  
PASS INTO HEAVEN.

BUT ENOUGH CHIT  
CHAT, GIRL! YOU HAVE  
SOMETHING I WANT--  
LUCIFER'S POWER!

HERE IS HEAVEN'S  
GATE. TEMPTING  
ISN'T IT?

FSH

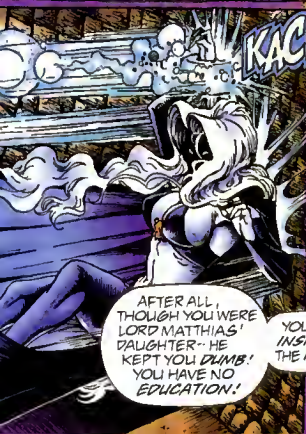
OOM



MY  
SWORD!

JUST BECAUSE YOU  
HARNESS LUCIFER'S  
POWER, DOESN'T  
MEAN YOU CAN  
WIELD IT.

SSSSSS  
SSSSSS



KACHING

AFTER ALL,  
THOUGH YOU WERE  
LORD MATTHIAS'  
DAUGHTER-- HE  
KEPT YOU DUMB!  
YOU HAVE NO  
EDUCATION!



KACHING

YOU HAVE NO  
INSIGHT INTO  
THE INFINITE!



YOU'RE AN UNEDUCATED  
WENCH, AS IT SHOULD  
BE WITH ALL WOMEN!

CRACKLE

CRACKLE

YOU WERE  
CONTENT TO  
PLAY THE VICTIM!  
AND NOW YOUR  
POWER WILL BE  
MINE!

SSHHHHHHH

TIMES CHANGE,  
LITTLE SORCERER.  
I'VE LEARNED MUCH

Ping

I RECALL OUR  
TIMES TOGETHER.  
YOU WERE THE WIDE  
EYED INNOCENT!  
THE ABUSE YOU  
SUFFERED BY YOUR  
FATHER'S HAND--  
AT FIRST I  
PITIED  
YOU.

THEN I REALIZED  
YOU DESERVED IT!

Ping

Ping



**KADOOM!**

**KA WA**

**BOOM**

I AM NO LONGER THE GOOD DAUGHTER. I DIDN'T ALLOW MY VICTIMIZATION, I GRASPED ONTO A DREAM OF A HAPPY FAMILY!

IT WOULD NEVER COME TO PASS. MY DEAR MOTHER WAS MURDERED BY MATTHIAS AND SENT HERE TO HELL!

BUT THAT WASN'T MY ONLY DREAM, NICCOLO

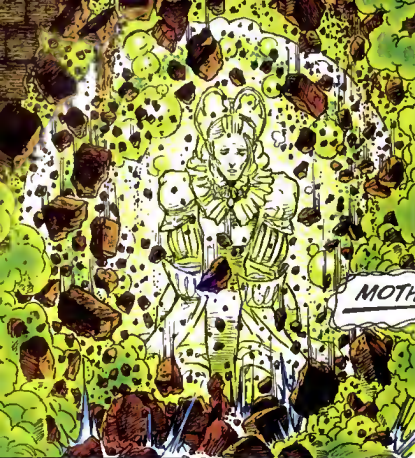
EVERY TIME MY FATHER BEAT ME -- I DREAMED, I PRAYED FOR DEATH! I ENVIED THE DEAD!

DO YOU HEAR ME?!

NOW I HAVE EXACTLY WHAT I WANT! I AM THE QUEEN OF THE DEAD!

NO! THERE ARE VAST POWERS BEYOND YOUR IMAGININGS AT PLAY

**CRASHMAN**



**MOTHER!**

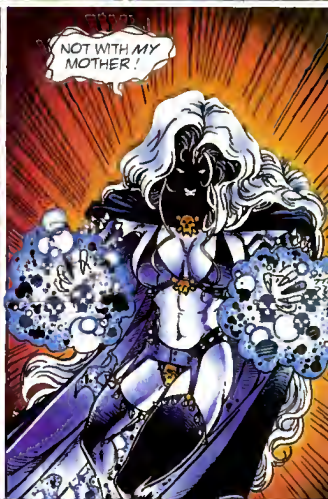
**DON'T DO ANTHING  
RASH, HOPE!**

**THE "NEXUS OF ALL  
THINGS" NEEDS *BALANCE*.  
EVIL HAS OVERTAKEN IT.**

**YOUR MOTHER'S  
*GOOD* SPIRIT IS  
THE *ANCHOR*. THERE  
CANNOT BE ONE  
WITHOUT THE  
OTHER.**



**NOT WITH MY  
MOTHER!**





PLEASE HOPE  
REMEMBER OUR  
TIMES TOGETHER  
BY THE POND WE  
WERE HAPPY.

REMEMBER  
MATTERS OF  
THE HEART.



THE FACT THAT  
YOU EXIST AFTER  
MY CONQUEST OF  
LUCIFER IS  
MERELY AN  
OVERSIGHT.

AAAAAAA!

THIS IS MY  
REALM. AND I  
WILL DO WITH  
IT WHAT I  
PLEASE.

CHING-KA





THE NEXUS  
NEEDS BALANCE!  
YOU DON'T  
UNDERSTAND!

BUMP  
BUMP  
SQUI!



AS FOR THE  
MATTERS OF  
THE HEART... YOU  
DON'T HAVE A  
HEART,  
NICCOLO.

SPLAT!





IT'S TAKEN  
SO LONG TO  
FIND YOU,  
MOTHER

POOR CHILD. FIRST  
YOUR FATHER, THEN  
LUCIFER. THEY'VE  
TWISTED YOU INTO  
A CHILD OF  
DARKNESS



THE CATHEDRAL, IT'S  
DISAPPEARING. GO TO  
HEAVEN'S GATE NOW.  
FOLLOW THE LIGHT  
BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE.

WITHOUT  
YOU? PLEASE  
CHILD--COME.

IT'S IMPOSSIBLE,  
MOTHER. MY PLACE  
IS HERE.



IT'S NOT TOO  
LATE. FOLLOW  
ME OR YOU WILL  
BE ALONE!

IT IS TOO LATE.  
I AM NOT A CHILD  
OF DARKNESS. I  
AM DARKNESS.



IT IS MY  
DESTINY.

I AM  
DEATH.

LADY  
DEATH!



GOODBYE  
MOTHER

FAREWELL

TO KNOW HER STORY IS  
TO KNOW A WOMAN  
CURSED.

ein

# Lady Death Lives On



LADY DEATH & EVIL ERNIE © BRIAN PULIDO

**Hope's** story has only begun, say creators Pulido, Hughes, and Jensen.

By Craig Shutt

Lady Death burst onto the comics scene in the 1991 mini-series *Evil Ernie: Youth Gone Wild* #1, but

it wasn't until her own mini-series appeared in January 1994 that she generated the excitement and attention her creative team hoped she would. They had become convinced that it was a long shot, though, so they were nearly as surprised as the retailers who got caught empty-handed.

"We worked on the concept for a year before she premiered," relates creator and writer Brian Pulido. "And we got a great reception when we showed her to people at the 1993 San Diego Convention. So we had high hopes."

Wary retailers shied away from the book because orders were due just as the market was suffering from product flooding last year. The high cover price brought on by a chromium cover didn't help, either. "The market's demands battered some of the excitement out of us," Pulido admits. "We were unsure what kind of response she would get."

Needless to say, response was good. In fact, the book flew out the door across the country. "When people flipped out for it, we knew *Lady Death* was receiving the reaction we'd hoped for," he says. "But it exceeded our expectations at the time, for sure."



Writer/Creator  
Brian Pulido

In *Evil Ernie: Youth Gone Wild* from Eternity Comics, *Lady Death* appeared in Evil Ernie's fantasies to encourage the deranged title character to kill as many people as he could in her name. "All this death for me? How sweet," she coos to Ernie as his rampage begins.

The three-part *Lady Death* miniseries outlines the character's origin and motivations. In it, a medieval girl named Hope renounces her humanity so she can follow her evil father into Hell, where he has gone to battle Lucifer for control. Hope seeks revenge for the hideous death her father delivered to her mother and lover, among many others, in his quest for demonic power.

Along the way, she encounters Cremator, blacksmith to the Lords of Hell, who forges a sword for her needs and presents her with a chest of clothing. Lucifer originally had given the chest to his lover Purgatori, who vanished eons ago. Hope then abandons her civilian identity in favor of that of *Lady Death*.

She demands that Lucifer return

her to her life on Earth, but Lucifer refuses and snarls, "As long as the living walk the Earth, you will never, ever return home to Earth!" With that said, she begins her mission to exterminate life on Earth so that she can someday return there.

"*Lady Death* is a blast to write," Pulido says. "I see her as an underdog character. Yes, she's powerful, and yes, she's a goddess, but her story is valid for a lot of folks. She's been traumatized, but she prevails despite everything being against her. She's kind of an inversion of the basic heroic myth."

*"There are a lot of superpowered women, but they don't take the total stand that Lady Death does. Consequences and cause and effect don't really matter to her. Her goal justifies her means, and she takes that to the bank every time."*

— Steven Hughes



Artist  
Steven Hughes



Colorist  
Jason Jensen

Artist Steven Hughes agrees. "There are a lot of superpowered women, but they don't take the total stand that *Lady Death* does," he says. "Consequences and cause and effect don't really matter to her. Her goal justifies her means, and she takes that to the bank every time."

The team tried several versions before arriving at *Lady Death*'s ultimate look, Hughes relates. "We started out with a teenybopper look," he says. "That didn't really work, so we went [in] the other direction, trying one that was heavier and more mature, about 35 years old. We decided we wanted her more svelte, so we went with a middle ground of about 23 years old."

Although well aware of the female portrayals of Death at other companies, Hughes didn't look to them for inspiration. "We wanted her to be as voluptuous as every guy's dream," he says. "I think the other companies' versions make the point that Death doesn't always have to be horrific, and we agree with that."

The final design for her costume—such as it is—follows sketches Pulido provided to Hughes in early discussions. "I punched it up to make her more desirable, but I didn't steer far away from the original idea," Hughes notes.

And, while her physical form definitely won't be changing, her costume will be. "Like any woman, she can change her mind about what she





wants to wear at any time," Hughes says. When Hope opened Purgatori's chest, she unlocked an entire wardrobe of outfits, he explains. "It's all at her beck and call, and she can make new costumes appear whenever she wants a change."

Change is definitely in the air for Lady Death, as her next big adventure has already been mapped out. It begins in February, when the first issue of the four-part *Lady Death: Between Heaven & Hell* hits the stands. In that monthly series, the lady will be facing off against Lucifer's old flame Purgatori, as well as other familiar faces.

"Lady Death is going to go through all types of changes in this series," promises Hughes. "She has many challenges ahead. [The battle with] Purgatori will be a turning point in her life, and it will focus her attention on how strong she is and how she uses her judgment. She's smart, and she'll take matters into her own hands. The outcome will not be pretty."

*Evil Ernie: Revenge*, the four-part mini-series which began in October, has a Lady Death subplot that will lead into her *Between Heaven & Hell* mini-series, Pulido explains. "Steven and I agree that events in the Evil Ernie story have to be accomplished to affect the Lady Death mythos before her next story can be told."

But couldn't Lady Death's story be told at a faster rate for all her eager fans?

"We don't want to saturate the market with something that's not so good," Pulido says. "We'd rather do less of a better thing." Hughes agrees. "Putting Lady Death on a monthly schedule would be doing her a disservice.

We don't want the desire for Lady Death to wane."

The two relate the concept to movie-making, in which the sequel to a popular film follows the original by a year or more. That analogy comes naturally to Pulido, whose background

A depiction of Ms. Death by George Pérez and Mark McKenna.

includes service as an assistant director for a variety of videos and commercials after receiving a degree from New York University's film school in 1986.

"My visual background helps the comic book presentation," he says, Hughes adds. "Our books have a very cinematic flavor. You sit back, turn down the lights, put on some music, relax, and take a walk on the wild side."

It also extends to the coloring, with both men pointing to colorist Jason Jensen as a key ingredient in the team. Says Jensen, "For most of the books, I usually read the script prior to beginning my work, to get a feel for it. It helps to set the mood."

Atmosphere is critical to Lady Death, because of the medieval tone and the combination of dark, disturbing nights along with bright, flame-filled underworld settings. "There are lots of light sources in the book," Jensen says. "There is always a glow on Lady Death."

The coloring also aids the storytelling aspect of the book, which can appear deceptively simple, he adds. "The storytelling is very straightforward, very easy to follow, but there's a lot going on," he says. "It's very cinematic in that way. And the book would lose a lot of that simplicity and mood if it were in black-and-white."

To keep eager Lady Death fans from storming the Chaos! castle doors before February, the team has created a host of ancillary items. First up is a 50-card chromium Lady Death card set, which hit the market the third week in September. It features cards by a variety of hot artists, including Steven Hughes, Adam Hughes, Greg Capullo, Jim Balent, William Tucci, and Joe Linsner.

Following that in November will be an all-chromium poster depicting a charged-up Lady Death standing in a graveyard. The 19- by 27-inch poster will be limited to 10,000 copies and run for \$29.95. Also in November, the *Evil Ernie: Youth Gone Wild* paperback will be reissued. And in December, the two-issue micro-series *Detonator*—a creator-owned title from Pulido and Hughes, with coloring by Digital Chameleon—will be released with a Bad Girl gallery in the back of the first issue, picturing Lady Death along with *Detonator* characters Mindbender and War Witch. A gallery in the second issue features Lady Death poses along with two other *Detonator* heroines, Stiletto and Roulette. Also on board are a second Lady Death Swimsuit issue (with a to-be-announced shipping date), as well as a fully painted, cold-cast Lady Death statue designed and sculpted by Clayburn Moore, retailing for \$125, with a March or April shipping date planned. Finally, another sequel is in the works for Halloween '95, with a promotion that, Pulido says, "will stand the industry on its ear. We're anti-hype here, so you know if we say it, we mean it."

Considering how the team has lived up to fans' expectations so far, it looks like there's a long and healthy life ahead for Lady Death.

### Lady Death Checklist:

*Evil Ernie: Youth Gone Wild* #1-#5 (Eternity Comics)  
*Evil Ernie: The Resurrection* #1-#4 (Chaos! Comics)  
*Evil Ernie* #0 (Chaos! Comics)  
*Evil Ernie Special Limited Edition* #1 (Adventure Comics)  
*Lady Death* #1-#3 (Chaos! Comics)  
*Lady Death Commemorative Edition* #1 (Chaos! Comics)  
*Lady Death Swimsuit Special* #1 (both velvet and standard covers, Chaos! Comics)  
*Lady Death* #1/2 (Chaos! Comics & Wizard press)

### To come:

*Evil Ernie: Revenge* #1-#4 (October 1994)  
*Detonator* with Bad Girl Gallery (December 1994)  
*Lady Death: Between Heaven & Hell* #1-#4 (beginning February 1995)  
*Lady Death Swimsuit Special* #2 (TBA)  
*Lady Death's* third mini-series (October 1995)

★  
 Lady Death gets a little peeved at her pal Evil Ernie in *The Resurrection*.



# Artist's Sketchbook



*Right: back in 1990, Brian Pulida brought lead to paper and Lady Death was born. This preliminary version later gave way to the diva of darkness.*



*Though lacking for a face, she was still curvy, oh so sexy, and her lingerie was out of this world.*

Even under the worst conditions, Lady Death finds a moment to exhort her pleasure.



Professionally known as the "rough", the background drawing is a general sketch depicting composition, scale, and perspective. This drawing may go through a series of changes before the penciler, inker, and colorist finish off the final artwork. Unlike a dozen others, this piece was lucky enough to find its way to the printed page.



They make quite the couple.





BLACK  
TOP  
BACKGB

THE  
ART  
CONTIN

← FULL  
BLEED  
↓



The cover is considered to be the most important piece of artwork in the entire book. For any artist, it's there where they want to show their wares. The background sketch of a future cover may soon be appearing on a rock at your favorite comic book store; look for it.

BRILL  
THIS P  
COVER  
FOR  
#2

ROCK:  
DS 2  
---



*We all agree that Lady Death looks awesome, but these sketches must give way to the last step before color can be added. Once penciled the inker steps in and defines light and dark strokes. Although the pages could be published at this point, it's the colorist's job to give them life.*